

Community Preservation Act Committee

Date: February 8, 2023

Time: 6:05pm – 7:45pm

Location: Conducted remotely due to Covid-19.

Minutes

Remote Participation: Clarissa Rowe
Jo Anne
Preston
Susan
Doctrow
David
Swanson
JoAnn
Robinson
Leslie Mayer
Kin Lau
Alexander
Franzosa
Pamela Heidell

Also Attending Remotely: Julie Wayman
- Budget
Director

Jim Feeney
-Deputy Town
Manager

Deanna
Stacchi
-Minutes

Judy Weinberg
Kenneth
Theriault
Heather
Leavell
Robert Brazile
George
Parsons

Budget Director, Julie Wayman, welcomed members and guests at 6:05pm. Ms. Wayman explained that due to Covid-19 the meeting was conducted remotely and read through the Town's disclaimers about remote meetings and the Acknowledgement of Native Lands. Ms. Wayman noted that the meeting was being recorded.

Clarissa Rowe, CPAC Chair, reminded attendees that the FY24 CPA requests exceed the available funds by about \$1 million. She requested that groups consider reducing their requests, if possible. Ms. Rowe stated that there would be no vote taken this evening. The meeting to discuss and vote on the presentations is scheduled for February 22, 2023.

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Preston motioned to approve the minutes of 11/22/2022, as amended, seconded by Ms. Mayer. The Committee unanimously approved 8-0.

Ms. Doctrow motioned to approve the minutes of 1/23/2023, as amended, seconded by Mr. Swanson. The Committee unanimously approved 8-0.

Ms. Mayer requested that the minutes for 2/1/2023 be tabled.

FY24 Applicant Presentations

a. AFOD Building and Energy Upgrades and Repairs – Arlington Friends of Drama

Judy Weinberg shared the history of the building, located in Arlington's historic district. Originally a church, the building was erected in 1877 and was purchased by the theater in 1933. The repair and renovation of the interior seating has been removed from the original proposal to save funding. The AFOD is requesting \$29,500 for exterior repairs and \$158,250 for HVAC upgrades. There is potential for \$45K in rebates. Ms. Weinberg stated that the projected timeline is to begin July 1 when funding is awarded and hopes that it will be completed by mid-September, in time for the theater's first performance of the seasons. She also noted that 2023 marked the 100th anniversary of the theater.

Kenneth Theriault shared photos of the building's structural concerns; rotting trim, crumbling foundation, deteriorating siding (particularly on the south side) and cracked granite steps at the Academy Street entrance. With funding, the group will be able to replace, repair and paint the trim and siding. They will also be able to repair the masonry to ensure safe access while maintaining the integrity of the historical building.

Mr. Theriault also described HVAC concerns; two of the five HVAC systems have failed "completely" and one is working at a reduced capacity. The coolant used in the systems has been banned and is no longer available so simple repairs will prove to be inadequate by today's standards. With funding the AFOD hopes to replace all five systems and the two gas furnaces that serve as a back-up heating system.

Mr. Lau – Suggested purchasing the equipment now and arranging for a July 1 delivery in hopes that the project can be completed during the summer before the first performance. He noted that there are long wait times for materials and equipment. Mr. Theriault stated that the group needed to be awarded funding before ordering but was assured that the needed

equipment is readily available. Mr. Lau also suggested a contingency of 10-15% to cover unplanned occurrences. Ms. Weinberg stated that AFOD has additional funds to supplement any unforeseen costs.

Ms. Heidell – Asked what the rebate amount typically would be. Ms Weinberg said that it was expected to be about \$45K. If awarded, \$45K would be returned to CPA.

Ms. Mayer – Inquired about accessibility. Ms. Weinberg stated that the theater is fully accessible including a lift from street level to the auditorium.

Ms. Doctrow – Shared that she had been assigned to the application and expressed her appreciation to the AFD for taking the CPAC budget into consideration by removing the chair replacement from the proposal. She also stated that she found out, based on information from Stuart Saginor of the Community Preservation Association, that the chairs could be covered by CPA in the future under rehabilitation and restoration.

b. Document Digitization – Cyrus E. Dallin Art Museum

Heather Leavell, Director and Curator of the Dallin Art Museum, requested \$71,879.64 to continue the digitization and rehousing project. The Robbins Library voted unanimously, with the blessing and support of Cyrus Dallin's granddaughter, to transfer all documents and materials to the museum. Digitization will allow for the valuable materials to be shared with the community and future generations through research, discovery and social media. The collection includes over 3,000 images, documents, works of art, letters, manuscripts and awards.

Ms. Leavell shared photos of some of the collection's current housing conditions which are not ideal for preservation; cardboard archive boxes, file cabinets and non-archival wrapping materials. She also noted that the collection will be cataloged to increase its educational value. Ms. Leavell also presented photos of some of the updates to the archives room including artifact boxes, flat filing cabinets and preservation archive materials. The museum will continue to scan all documents and photos. 3D artifacts will be photographed and stored. The goal is to be ready to share with the public by April 2024.

c. Jason Russell House, Preservation Continued – Arlington Historical Society

Robert Brazile, accompanied by George Parsons, briefly described each of the four phases of the project to this point. Previously awarded CPA funds have contributed to the preservation of important historic artifacts, improved safety and security of the Jason Russell House and improved practices and procedures.

FY24 funding in the amount of \$73K is being requested for the 5th phase which will include; a conditions assessment, restoration and repairs of windows, floors and woodwork, electrical safety updates and remaining exterior work.

Mr. Brazile noted that the Historical Society has always stayed within budget. He added that support from CPA would allow the group to leverage support from other agencies. Mr. Brazile stated that 2023 also marked the 100th anniversary of the Jason Russell House.

Ms. Rowe – Expressed gratitude to the Historical Society for being faithful stewards of the property. She asked who formulated the original plan. Mr. Brazile stated the plan was designed by Patrick Guthry who inspects the property annually and supervises contractors to ensure the historical integrity of the house is maintained.

d. Town Hall Envelope Presentation, Phase 1 (Town Hall Clocktower) – Town of Arlington

Jim Feeney acknowledged JoAnn Robinson for encouraging Patrick Guthry to take on the Town Hall project and conduct the conditions assessment. He also thanks Alexander Franzosa for meeting with him during the walk through.

Mr. Feeney stated that the most pressing need at this time, due to safety and damage concerns, is the clock tower and cupola which were built in 1912. Time and weather has caused severe deterioration that has resulted in significant leaking and water damage as well as compromising the structural integrity of the building. Mr. Feeney stressed that these factors present a risk to public safety.

Mr. Feeney presented diagrams, photos and videos of the leaks and structural damage affecting both the inside and outside of the Town Hall. He noted the importance of protecting Lyons Hearing Room which holds secure ballot information and documents. In addition to leaks, the damage is also compromising the brick and steel inside the clocktower which is causing it to shift and tilt. A tarp has been installed to cover the damage and prevent breakage from falling.

The goal of the project; to document and remove the clocktower, stockpile the savable elements, install a new, flat roof over the opening and develop a plan to rebuild the clocktower and reproduce the priceless elements that are not salvageable. The work is estimated to cost \$385K which will also allow more time to secure additional funding.

Mr. Franzosa – Reiterated Mr. Feeney's concerns, sharing that he had observed the severe damage and treacherous conditions during the walk through.

Jo Anne Preston – Questioned the safety of the building and suggested holding Town Meeting on the football field. She also inquired if the town had a budget for items such as roof replacements which are necessary every 20-25 years. Mr. Feeney stated that Capital does hold some funds for the type of work she is suggesting, but not enough to meet the scope of current needs. He also pointed out that Capital only looks out 5 years.

Mr. Lau – Asked if the historic clocktower could be used as a feature in the town garden once it was removed, noting that leaks would not be a concern if the clocktower was on the ground.

Mr. Feeney shared that the clocktower would likely have to be dismantled and removed in pieces. Repurposing the tower has not been discussed. Mr. Lau also requested more information about the extent of the steel repairs and replacement needs. Mr. Feeney stated that engineering will be evaluating the composition of the steel and its weight bearing capacity. Mr. Guthry has recommended saving as much of the original fabric as possible.

Ms. Mayer – Thanked Mr. Feeney for his thorough investigation and dedication to the project. She asked if the clock tower would still be considered historic if it was refabricated. Ms. Rowe explained that it would depend on the materials used to refabricate the structure. Mr. Feeney noted that many of the original materials no longer exist, but the structure would remain historic if they stayed true to the original design.

Several CPAC members expressed their concern that this project is not part of the Capital Plan. Mr. Feeney explained that due to the timing of the report, he was unable to submit the project to CPC on time but was able to meet the CPAC deadline. Ms. Rowe suggested that the project be brought to the Finance Committee, Select Board and CPC. Ms. Doctrow encouraged some CPAC support which would increase leverage with the town to address more of the work in the Capital Plan.

New Business – N/A

Ms. Rowe noted that the current CPA funds amount does not include returned funds. Returned funds will be reviewed.

The Committee members discussed the voting process for the next meeting, questioning if budgeting concerns should be considered in determining how the vote should be taken. The Committee will further discuss ranking, phasing and majority voting.

Ms. Rowe concluded the meeting at 7:45pm.